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# Visualizing Borders

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## Abstract

This paper seeks to analyse and highlight the ways in which borders manifest visually. I invite to search for and pay attention to visual manifestations of different types of borders to raise awareness of border situations that various people find themselves in.

A wall, a line or a fence is a visual manifestation of a border. It can tell us about the level of ‘openness’ of the border, and the regimes of the bordering countries. However, researching visual manifestations of borders, this paper suggest, is mostly not about the borders themselves, but about the ways borders shape the landscape and experiences of people. Visual border manifestations are not necessarily walls and fences, but rather signs within the semi-otic landscape (Jaworski and Thurlow, 2010) indexing or symbolizing the border.

This paper presents current issues discussed in border studies, highlights a distinction between geopolitical and non-geopolitical borders, and proposes visual research of these different varieties of borders. It also provides examples from several case studies, sketching a proposal of how and what kind of visual border manifestations can be investigated.

**Keywords:** Borders, visual manifestations, visual research.

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